

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Northern District of Alabama

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Federal Correctional Officer Charged with Accepting Bribes for Prison Contraband

BIRMINGHAM – Federal prosecutors last week charged a former employee at the Federal Correctional Institution at Aliceville with accepting \$5,695 in bribes to smuggle contraband into the prison and lying about it to investigators, announced Acting U.S. Attorney Robert O. Posey, FBI Special Agent in Charge Roger C. Stanton and Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, Special Agent in Charge Robert A. Bourbon.

The U.S. Attorney's Office filed a two-count information in U.S. District Court charging ERIC C. PENDLETON, 54, of Montgomery, with accepting a bribe in return for violating his official duty as a federal correctional officer, and with making false statements to agents of the FBI and the DOJ-OIG. In conjunction with the charges, prosecutors also filed a plea agreement with Pendleton.

As a federal correctional officer, Pendleton was a public official. He worked at the women's prison from about January 2014 to August 2015. Beginning about September 2014, Pendleton worked as a federal materials handler supervisor in the prison commissary and laundry, overseeing inmates assigned to work in those facilities, according to his plea agreement.

During that time, Pendleton reached an agreement with an inmate to bring requested items, including prohibited items such as cigarettes, into the prison in return for payment, according to his plea agreement. Pendleton arranged for payment by providing inmates with prepaid credit card numbers and instructing them to have friends or family members load money onto the cards. He also told inmates they could pay him by having friends or family send money orders to a Tuscaloosa County address, according to the plea agreement. Pendleton owned the home at that address, but relatives lived there.

Pendleton deposited many of the money orders into his bank account, some bearing the name of the inmate on whose behalf the payment was made in the "memo" line, according to the plea agreement.

When agents interviewed Pendleton in September 2015, he falsely denied smuggling contraband into the prison or providing credit card numbers or an address to inmates so they could have payments sent to him, his plea agreement states.

The FBI and DOJ-OIG investigated the case, which Assistant U.S. Attorney Xavier O. Carter Sr. is prosecuting.

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